



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# Memorandum

Subject: Annual Occupational Safety and Health Report to the  
Department of Labor

Date: MAY 21 1997

From: Acting Assistant Administrator for Policy, Planning,  
and International Aviation, API-1

Reply to  
Attn. of:

To: Associate Director, Administrative Management Division, M-73

Attached for your information is the annual Occupational Safety and Health report for FY 1996, for the FAA.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sue Green at 267-9548.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Louise E. Maillett".

Louise E. Maillett

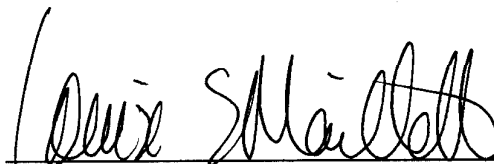
Attachment

ANNUAL OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REPORT

OF THE

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Reporting Period: 1996

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louise Maillett", written over a horizontal line.

SIGNATURE

Acting Assistant Administrator for Policy, Planning  
and International Aviation, API-1

TITLE

Louise Maillett  
202-267-3576

SAFETY AND HEALTH OFFICIAL

# ANNUAL OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REPORT

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## I. BACKGROUND

### A. Unique Agency Characteristics - Optional.

#### 1. Geographic/Organizational.

##### a. Adverse Geographical Impact Due to Weather and Location:

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) buildings, sites, facilities, and equipment are located throughout all 50 states. Remoteness of FAA facilities coupled with extreme variations in weather (e.g., Alaska and Northern Washington State), has a potential adverse impact on workers involved in the construction, retrofit, upgrades, and maintenance of facilities. Work is hampered by the necessity to utilize dog-sled teams and snow mobiles to reach remote sites. Hypothermia and isolation are potential threats to the well being of employees.

##### b. Positive Impact Due to the Existing Organizational Structure:

The FAA Health and Safety Program underwent a functional and organizational realignment (FAA Notice N1100.234) in 1994. The purpose of the realignment was to consolidate resources/functions and to enhance program development and management. The Office of Environment and Energy (AEE) is responsible for program policy and oversight. The Environmental, Energy, and Safety Division within the National Airspace System (NAS) Transition and Implementation Directorate (ANS) is responsible for implementation of the safety, health, and environmental compliance program. Management and fiscal responsibilities are mandated from headquarters and are promulgated to the system support center level via regional and system management offices (SMO). Under the revised structure, greater emphasis and resources are being focused on a comprehensive, systematic program to address occupational safety and health protection for FAA employees.

##### c. Adverse Impact Due to Unique FAA Facility Designs:

Inherent in facility designs (e.g., Airport Traffic Control Towers) are attributes unique to the FAA. The architecture and engineering applicable to these unique facility designs necessitate massive coordination between headquarters and the regions for budgeting, procurement, construction, and commissioning. Policy establishment and implementation requires lengthy coordination, including but not limited to, national, regional, SMOs and system support centers, as well as unions representing national and regional interests.

## **2. Environments/Processes.**

### **b. Adverse Impact Due to FAA Budgeting Processes:**

The Capital Investment Plan (CIP) provides for routine fiscal planning and procurement of facilities and equipment. Due to the nature of safety, health, and environmental compliance program issues, it is difficult at best to forecast future budgetary needs to fund response to disasters, catastrophes, asbestos exposures, chemical exposures, etc., as the events are non-routine and unscheduled. Current efforts are underway to establish a baseline compliance profile in FAA facilities in order to better predict budget needs.

### **B. Catastrophes/Disasters.**

The Value Jet accident received extensive press coverage. While there was no direct impact on the agency's occupational safety and health program, security inspectors recently hired as a result of the accident, will need the appropriate occupational safety and health training.

## **II. PROGRAM PERFORMANCE**

### **A. Injury and Illness Experience.**

Our top 4 major causes of injuries and illness are the following:

- a) traumatic injury-unclassified (e.g., falls, slips, falling objects, and paint fumes, etc.)
- b) traumatic stress (e.g., violence, work environment, etc.)
- c) traumatic strain multiple (e.g., falling from ramp, runway, gangplank, fall getting on or off elevator, etc.)
- d) traumatic back strain

While back strain is the fourth highest as far as number of cases, it is the second most expensive claim and constitutes twenty-three percent of our injury and illness costs. Although stress related cases remain the FAA's most expensive claims, there have not been many new stress related cases in the past several years. This decrease, in part, is due to the careful review of claims, stringent filing processes, and updated databases to collect and track the injury and illness data.

FAA's lost-time injury and illness rate has been decreasing over the past several years. This decrease is also due to careful review of claims, stringent filing processes, and updated databases to collect and track the injury and illness data.

In order to facilitate future trend analysis, the FAA pursued the development of a new Safety Management Information System (SMIS). Once that database is developed and populated, information for the program will be derived from the data.

B. Significant Accomplishments.

1. Workplace Conditions.

a. Alternate Standard:

During the past year, representatives from the Federal Aviation Administration, FAA employee representatives, and the Department of Transportation have worked with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to develop an alternate standard for Airport Traffic Control Towers (ATCT). The alternate standard contains requirements which permit a single means of egress in ATCTs under certain conditions that are considered an equivalent level of protection to two separate means of egress. The alternate standard also has requirements for newly constructed ATCTs constructed after the year 2000 to have two approved means of egress when the occupant load is 25 or more. Each ATCT must have an emergency action plan, fire prevention plan, fire drills, and a training program to comply with the alternate standard. The draft alternate standard, which will be published in 29 CFR 1960.20, Emergency Exit Routes in Airport Traffic Control Towers, is expected to become effective in 1997.

b. OSHECCOM

On March 18, 1996, the FAA Administrator, approved the agency's Occupational Safety, Health, and Environmental Compliance Committee (OSHECCOM) charter, which established requirements for committees at headquarters, regional, center, and field levels. The charter also defines the objectives, composition, procedures and training for the OSHECCOM. The purpose of the OSHECCOM is to:

- Establish a culture within the FAA that facilitates an effective occupational safety, health, and environmental (OSH&E) program.
- Improve intra-agency cooperation by establishing communication across the lines of business and promote a comprehensive OSH&E program which can be implemented at all operational levels.
- Provide an alternative method for employees to raise concerns related to OSH&E issues without fear of reprisal.
- Monitor the OSH&E program.

- Ensure consistency in the OSH&E program and eliminate duplication of effort.

The headquarters OSHECCOM has been established. The process of establishing and training the regional OSHECCOMs was initiated and essentially completed in 1996. It is anticipated that all regional OSHECCOMs will be established and trained in 1997 and that certification of the OSHECCOMs by OSHA will be requested.

c. FAA Policy on Episodic Asbestos Incidents:

The new FAA policy memorandum delineates the position of the agency with regard to medical follow-up procedures for FAA employees who work in areas adjacent to asbestos-related construction activities and who may have been exposed to airborne asbestos fibers when there has been an unanticipated failure of containment controls on one or more occasions. This policy is in addition to the requirements under 29 CFR 1926.1101(d)(3).

2. Safety Awareness and Hazard Recognition, Information & Training.

Efforts were initiated to develop strategic and performance plans for the environmental, occupational safety and health, and energy training programs with completion of draft plans projected for 1997. The definition of roles and responsibilities related to training policy, implementation, course delivery, and identification of FAA Academy courses, is also underway and expected to be completed in 1997.

During the past year, the FAA OSH&E HAZMAT Training Committee developed a training video for ATCT Managers to use to aid them in developing emergency action plans. The FAA formed an alliance with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and used this training CD that provides basic occupational safety and health awareness for all FAA employees. The CD was delivered to more than 1500 multimedia training platforms which makes it available to all FAA employees.

3. Program Effectiveness.

The FAA completed Phase II of the Occupational Safety and Health Compliance Assessment Program (OSHCAP) baseline assessments of FAA facilities, bringing to over 60% the total assessments completed as of December 31, 1996. Baseline assessments of all facilities in the Alaskan and Central Regions, and the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center have been completed. In addition, OSHCAP protocols were updated to reflect regulatory changes.

A prototype Safety Management Information System (SMIS) was developed which will be converted and placed on the FAA/AEE intranet, thereby establishing an FAA electronic mishap reporting system. Additional processes were established to assure integration of information from existing databases containing information on acquisitions, inspections, and workers compensation (WCIS). SMIS will be linked to these databases to provide management a measurement tool for safety policy effectiveness.

The FAA developed Safety and Environmental Assessment Management System (SEAMS) software for collecting OSHCAP data and preparing reports for OSHCAP assessments as well as converting prior data into the new application. Enhanced assessor software was also developed and pre-development effort on the SEAMS Manager application was initiated.

In 1996, processes were established to assure that environmental, safety and health, and energy requirements will be incorporated into existing systems and are included within emerging systems being acquired by the FAA. Emerging system designs reviewed in 1996 include the Airport Surveillance Radar (ASR) ASR-11, Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS), Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System (STARS), FAA Telecommunications Satellite (FAATSAT), and the Low Level Wind Shear Alert System (LLWAS). Existing systems reviewed include the ASR-9, Terminal Doppler Weather Radar (TDWR), Air Route Surveillance Radar (ARSR) ARSR-4, Next Generation Weather Radar (NEXRAD), Airport Surface Detection Equipment (ASDE) ASDE-3, 9020E Removal, and Radome Replacement. Design changes to emerging systems and modifications to existing systems were initiated as necessary to correct identified deficiencies.

#### 4. Safety and Health Problems.

The FAA recognized the need to provide occupational safety and health training for top managers. An awareness package is under development. This training complies with 29 CFR 1960.54. Accountability at all levels was stressed in the presentation.

#### 5. Employee Participation.

Two workshops were held with the Regional Occupational Safety and Health Managers (ROSHM) in 1996 to address immediate and long term issues to ensure continued compliance with OSHA regulatory requirements.

Two workshops were held with the Regional Program Managers for Environment and Safety (RPMES) in 1996 to address program responsibilities, funding

requirements, environmental compliance and occupational safety and health issues and to ensure continued compliance with environmental and safety and health regulatory requirements.

The current Professional Airways Systems Specialists (PASS) Agreement became effective in 1992. Negotiations to replace the existing agreement commenced in 1996. Safety issues are under consideration.

The current National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) Agreement became effective in 1993. Preparations were initiated in 1996 for negotiation of a new agreement in 1997. Safety issues are under consideration.

Several workshops have been held with headquarters and regional employees to develop safety and health policies. This process of including all the stakeholders ensures the policies will provide efficient and effective guidance.

On December 20, 1996, a final arbitration decision was issued in connection with an asbestos contamination grievance filed by NATCA at the Washington Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC). The decision directed the FAA to immediately proceed to build a tent structure to isolate the control room from the possibility of asbestos contamination either through breaches in the encapsulation or through ceiling failure. The FAA is working with NATCA to provide a quick response to the employee concerns of the control room of the Washington ARTCC.

Alternative proposals are being considered by the FAA and NATCA to resolve this matter in a timely and cost effective manner.

#### 6. Resources Added.

##### a. Workplace Hazard Abatement:

Total FY-96 funding of the Environmental, Occupational Safety and Health, and Energy Conservation Compliance budget line item was \$21M.

##### b. Research and Development:

FAA had no FY-96 RE&D funds applied to occupational safety and health.

##### c. Data Systems:

A geographical information system for environmental and safety requirements is being developed. The system proof-of-concept demonstrated that FAA data, from multiple Airway Facilities and Air Traffic source systems, can be integrated with industry spatial data and that commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS)

products can be used to present "Information of Value" to meet FAA headquarters and field day-to-day mission needs. A regional information system is also being developed which will contain an occupational safety, health and environmental compliance module for regional data information system requirements. The module will include six databases consisting of asbestos, fuel storage tanks, chemical inventory, PCBs, safe drinking water, and environmental and safety inspections.

d. Staffing:

No additional staffing was allocated to the occupational safety and health program in 1996.

e. Training:

A four hour Safety Awareness training CD was issued to train the general population of FAA employees on how to recognize and report unsafe conditions. Additionally, the course enables employees to learn what protective equipment is required under certain conditions.

The emergency egress training video provided employees with a visual presentation of the FAA initiative to educate all employees.

f. Other:

N/A

### III. PROGRAM PLANNING

A. Goals and Objectives.

1. Current Year's Goals and Objectives (1997).

- a. Complete Phase III of OSHCAP baseline assessments of FAA facilities (on-going).
- b. Complete the strategic and performance plans for the environmental, occupational safety and health, and energy training program (on-going).
- c. Request OSHA certification of FAA OSHECCOMs (new).
- d. Provide safety and health input for the negotiation of new PASS and NATCA agreements (on-going).

- e. Conduct at least one Regional Occupational Safety and Health (ROSHM) workshop, and one Regional Program Manager for Environment and Safety (RPMES) workshop (on-going).
  - f. Implement the Safety and Environmental Assessment Management System (SEAMS) and complete development of the SEAMS Manager application (new).
  - g. Develop interim policy on the Evaluation of Potential Radio Frequency (RF) Radiation Hazard at Planned and Existing Child Care Centers. This policy will ensure that proposed and existing Child Care Centers at FAA facilities are fully evaluated for possible radiation exposure hazard prior to commencement of construction (on-going).
  - h. Develop and issue new policies or revise existing FAA orders for specific OSH programs, e.g., Hearing Conservation, Occupational Safety and Health Roles and Responsibilities, Asbestos Management and Control, Radiation Hazards and Protection, Motor Vehicle Safety, Medical Surveillance, OSH Training for all FAA Employees, etc. (on-going).
  - i. Prepare a compliance program within 90 days of the effective date of the alternate standard in conformance with the requirements of the alternate standard. Ensure emergency action plans, fire prevention plans, fire drills and a training program are completed within the prescribed time frames noted in the alternate standard for every ATCT. (on-going).
2. Previous Year's Goals and Objectives (1996)
- b. Complete Phase II of OSHCAP baseline assessments of FAA facilities.  
-- Assessments were performed at all facilities included in the 1996 Phase II OSHCAP assessments.
  - c. Initiate the development of strategic and performance plans for the environmental, occupational safety and health, and energy training program. -- Development of the plans was initiated with the establishment of a working group.
  - d. Conduct at least one Regional Occupational Safety and Health Manager (ROSHM) workshop in 1996. -- Two ROSHM workshops were conducted in 1996.

- e. Conduct two Regional Program Manager for Environment and Safety (RPMES) workshops in 1996. -- Two RPMES workshops were conducted in 1996.
- f. Establish a process to assure that environmental, safety and health, and energy requirements are incorporated into existing systems and being included within emerging systems being acquired by the FAA. -- The processes were established in 1996. Standard Contract Data Requirements Lists (CDRLs) and Data Identification Descriptions (DIDs) were developed and working relationships established with integrated product teams. Emerging and existing systems were reviewed and design changes or modifications were recommended to correct identified deficiencies.
- g. Develop a Safety Environmental Assessment Management System (SEAMS) for collecting OSHCAP data and preparing reports for OSHCAP assessments. -- The SEAMS software was completed.
- h. Develop and issue new policies or revise existing FAA orders for specific OSH programs, e.g., Hearing Conservation, Asbestos Management and Control, Radiation Hazards and Protection, Motor Vehicle Safety, etc. -- Research was conducted and draft language developed for Roles & Responsibilities, Radiation Safety, Medical Surveillance, Radiation Protection at FAA Child Care Centers, Asbestos Protection, and OSH Training for FAA Employees.
- i. Develop a policy memorandum for "Medical Surveillance Requirements for FAA Employees Following Unanticipated, Episodic Releases of Asbestos Containing Dust." -- Policy memorandum was completed and signed in December 1996. This policy delineates the position of the agency with regard to medical follow-up procedures for FAA employees who work in areas adjacent to asbestos-related construction activities and who may have been exposed to airborne asbestos fiber when there has been an unanticipated failure of containment controls on one or more occasions. This policy will serve as interim policy until it is incorporated as an appendix in the agency's asbestos directive, currently under development.
- j. Prepare a compliance program within 90 days of the effective date of the alternate standard in conformance with the requirements of the alternate standard. Ensure emergency action plan, fire prevention plan, fire drills and a training program within the prescribed time frames noted in the alternate standard for every ATCT. -- Progress was deterred by delays within OSHA in the review of the proposed alternate standard which FAA/DOT had submitted. These materials were drafted in anticipation of the final alternate standard.

**B. Corrective Action Priorities.**

- a. The FAA used a standard safety methodology to determine the current priorities that affect the FAA occupational accidents, injuries, and illness rate during 1996. We set priorities, for using the resources we had available to correct safety issues, by assessing the frequency of occurrence of conditions, the severity of the conditions, and the probability of repeat occurrence of the conditions.
- b. The FAA conducted inspections of several regions and used the inspection data to quantify the prioritization of 1996 and future resources.

**A. Significant Initiatives.**

The FAA Acting Administrator Barry Valentine has endorsed the DOT National Driving Safety Awareness program initiated by Secretary Rodney Slater. The program encourages FAA employees to participate in the campaign, which provides tips that enable drivers to assess their unsafe driving habits. These tips head off behavior patterns that lead to accidents.

**D. Other Safety and Health Plans.**

N/A

**IV. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Efforts were initiated to develop an audit protocol for the FAA safety and health management review program. It will serve as a guide for planning and for conducting an evaluation of operating unit-level management systems and internal controls.

**V. GOVERNMENTWIDE INITIATIVES**

**Safety Belt Use**

Safety belt use within the FAA remains high. We do not have many vehicle accidents which show safety belt non-use to be a factor. We intend to continue with the current actions, i.e., regional safety and health managers continue to stress safety belt use during training sessions and direct observation surveys.

**VI. COMMENTS, REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

While we recognize the seat belt use is vitally important, we note that the initiative has been pursued since 1986 and enjoys considerable success. Therefore, the benefit of additional focus on that initiative may be diminishing. We encourage OSHA in future reports to focus attention on other initiatives (such as risk management) which would provide greater incremental safety improvements.